



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

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NOAA Fisheries Seeks Public Comment on Proposed Rule to Modify King Mackerel Management Measures for the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region

Comment Period Ends on January 30, 2017

NOAA Fisheries is seeking public comment on the proposed rule to implement Amendment 26 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region (Amendment 26).

Amendment 26 contains actions related to the king mackerel portion of the coastal migratory pelagic fishery in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region. These actions were proposed by the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils following review of the most recent stock assessment.

The proposed rule would:

- *Modify the management boundary for the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic migratory groups of king mackerel to create a year-round boundary at the Miami-Dade/Monroe County line.* The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council would be responsible for management measures in the mixing zone, which includes the exclusive economic zone off the Florida Keys.
- *Revise reference points, update the acceptable biological catch and annual catch limits, and revise commercial quotas and recreational annual catch targets for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel.* These proposed revisions are based on the results of the most recent stock assessment and are included below in Table 1.1.
- *Create a limited incidental catch allowance for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel caught as bycatch in the shark gillnet fishery.* This rule would allow for the harvest and sale of three king mackerel per crew member per trip from the Northern Zone and two king mackerel per crew member per trip from the Southern Zone.
- *Establish a commercial split season for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel in the Atlantic Southern Zone.* This split season would allocate 60% of the quota to season 1 (March 1-September 30) and 40% to season 2 (October 1 – the end of February).
- *Establish a commercial trip limit system for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel in the Atlantic Southern Zone.* The commercial trip limit of 3,500 pounds would remain in the area north of the Flagler/Volusia county line and remain in effect year-round as long as the fishery remains open. South of the Flagler/Volusia county line the trip limit would be 50 fish from March 1- March 31. After March 31, the trip limit would increase to 75 fish for the remainder of Season 1. For Season 2, the trip limit would be 50 fish, except that beginning on February 1, if less than 70 % of the Season 2 quota has been landed, the trip limit would be 75 fish.
- *Increase the recreational bag limit for Gulf of Mexico migratory group king mackerel to three fish per person per day.*
- *Revise the annual catch limits and commercial zone quotas for Gulf of Mexico migratory group king mackerel.* These proposed revisions are included below in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 2016/2017 Proposed Quotas for King Mackerel (pounds) under Amendment 26	
<i>Commercial</i>	
Gulf of Mexico Migratory Group	
Western Zone	1,231,360
Northern Zone	554,112
Southern Zone (hook-and-line)	646,464
Southern Zone (gillnet)	646,464
Atlantic Migratory Group	
Northern Zone (includes gillnets north of Cape Lookout, NC)	1,497,600
Southern Zone (Total)	5,002,400
Southern Zone (season 1)	3,001,440
Southern Zone (season 2)	2,000,960
<i>Recreational</i>	
Gulf of Mexico Migratory Group	6,260,000
Atlantic Migratory Group	10,900,000

Request for Comments

The comment period on the proposed rule ends on January 30, 2017. You may obtain electronic copies of Amendment 26 from the NOAA Fisheries Web site at:

http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_sa/cmp/2016/am%2026/index.html or the e-Rulemaking Portal (see Addresses section).

Addresses

You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2016-0120, by either of the following methods:

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal.

1. Go to www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2016-0120.
2. Click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields.
3. Enter or attach your comments.

MAIL: Submit written comments to Karla Gore, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

INSTRUCTIONS: Comments sent by any other method (such as e-mail), to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NOAA Fisheries.

All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NOAA Fisheries will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

NOAA Fisheries Southeast is pleased to announce the introduction of our **Text Message Alert Program**. The program will allow you to sign up to receive important fishery related alerts via text message. Text alerts you may receive include immediate fishery openings and closures, and any significant changes to fishing regulations that happen quickly.

How to opt-in

Sign up for related alerts for one or more of the following groups. Standard message & data rates may apply. You may opt-out at any time.

- **Gulf of Mexico Recreational Fisheries:** Text GULFRECFISH to 888777
- **Gulf of Mexico Commercial Fisheries:** Text GULFCOMMFISH to 888777
- **South Atlantic Recreational Fisheries:** Text SATLRECFISH to 888777
- **South Atlantic Commercial Fisheries:** Text SATLCOMMFISH to 888777
- **Caribbean Fisheries:** Text CARIBFISH to 888777